



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Idaho State Department of Education  
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[www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)

Media contact:  
Melissa McGrath  
(208) 332-6818  
[mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov)

# IDAHO RELEASES FIRST-EVER RESULTS OF STATEWIDE SAT SCHOOL DAY

BOISE – For the first time ever, Idaho has statewide baseline data on how students perform on college entrance exams.

Last April, nearly 17,000 high school juniors took the SAT college entrance exam – paid for by the state – which has increased the number of students taking a college entrance exam significantly. Just 2,829 students took the SAT in Idaho last year.

“I am excited we are now providing this great opportunity to all Idaho high school juniors across the state. We now know where we are and the areas in which we need to improve to ensure every student graduates from high school prepared to go on to postsecondary education or the workforce, without the need for remediation once they get there,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said.

The results of the first-ever Idaho SAT School Day show that one in four high school juniors taking the exam met the college- and career-readiness benchmarks set by the College Board. States like Maine and Delaware, which test all students on the SAT, showed similar results the first year they tested all students, according to the College Board.

The average score for Idaho high school juniors was 448 in critical reading, 454 in mathematics and 447 in writing. A score of 500 in each subject area has shown a student will be successful in postsecondary education after high school.

In years past, students voluntarily chose whether or not to take the ACT or SAT to prepare for postsecondary education and most paid for their own exams. Now, all high school juniors are required to take a college entrance exam paid for by the state. In 2007, the Idaho State Board of Education and Idaho Legislature approved new high school graduation requirements for the Class of 2013, requiring students to take more mathematics, more science and for all high school juniors to complete a college entrance exam. In 2011, through Students Come First, the state has been able to fund Idaho SAT School Day in which all high school juniors can take the SAT or ACCUPLACER exam, paid for by the state.

“Giving every student the opportunity to take the SAT is a step toward increasing access to postsecondary education,” said Ken Edmunds, President of the State Board of Education. “The Board is committed to helping all students prepare for success after high school.”

The state chose to contract with the College Board to provide the SAT and ACCUPLACER statewide after a competitive bidding and thorough review process. Students can still choose to take the ACT or COMPASS, but will have to pay to take them outside the school day.

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The ACCUPLACER and COMPASS are tests that provide students with useful information about their academic skills in math, English, and reading. The results are used by academic advisors and counselors to determine course selection in postsecondary education.

Student scores on college entrance exams – the SAT or ACT – are now part of Idaho’s new Five-Star Rating System. This is one measure the state uses to evaluate how Idaho schools are preparing students for postsecondary education and the workforce.

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**Editor’s Note:** Please be careful in reading and reporting the data on Idaho SAT School Day versus national results that are released for the ACT and SAT. The Idaho SAT School Day data measures the results of nearly all high school juniors taking the SAT paid for by the state. The national results for the ACT and SAT measures the results of a cohort of students (sophomores, juniors and seniors) graduating in a certain year who selected to take the SAT or ACT, not paid for by the state. Therefore, these data points cannot be directly compared.

Here is more on the national ACT and SAT results for your information:

- National ACT results were published August 22, 2012. These results reflect students in the Class of 2012 who chose to take the ACT, which is not paid for by the state. According to this data, 11,842 students in the Class of 2012 took the ACT at some point during their high school career. Of those taking the ACT, 26 percent met all four ACT college readiness benchmarks, slightly above the national average. The full report is available online at <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2012/states/idaho.html>.
- National SAT results will be released in September for the Class of 2012. These results will be for the senior cohort graduating in 2012 and will not include high school juniors in the Class of 2013 who took the SAT as part of the Idaho’s first-ever SAT School Day. These results will only show scores for Idaho students who chose to take the SAT as seniors in 2012, as juniors in 2011, and as sophomores in 2010, which was not paid for by the state. Therefore, these scores will differ from the scores reported for Idaho SAT School Day.